The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news material and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
3 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1641 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1942 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 32, NO. 38

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

President Roosevelt has been formally invited to address the forthcoming 62nd annual convention of the American Federation of Labor which will open on Oct. 5 in Toronto, Canada.

Of course, the President is so busy with war problems these days that he may not find it possible to accept the invitation. Nevertheless, we sincerely hope he will. In the last war President Wilson delivered an address to the 1917 convention of the American Federation of Labor that inspired the workers of America to reach new heights of service to their country. We think President Roosevelt can also accomplish a great deal by following the example of his distinguished predecessor.

Even if the President cannot come to the convention in person or arrange to address it by radio, he is certain to send an important message to the annual congress of labor.

He realizes, more clearly than ever before, that labor is the key to victory in this war. To defeat the Axis powers, we must first achieve superiority in war weapons. Production of armament depends to a large degree on labor. The battle of production must be won before the war can be won.

The Two Best Neighbors

For this reason, many distinguished leaders of our war effort will make it their business to attend the convention and talk to the delegates. Among them is Undersecretary of War Patterson.

Another outstanding leader who has accepted an invitation to attend is the Prime Minister of Canada, Mackenzie King. Canada is our ally in this war. Like this country, she is speeding up the armament of armaments and shipping it to the battlefronts of the war. Also many thousands of Canadian young men are being trained to fight in Europe, Africa and Asia for a United Nations Victory.

Therefore, holding the convention in Canada this year should go far toward cementing closer and friendlier relationships between the two best neighbors in the World—the United States and Canada.

Two fraternal delegates from the British Trades Union Congress will come to the convention, from England and give us the benefit of their experience in meeting the problems of war production.

Also Vice President Daniel J. Tobin, who has just returned to this country from a trip to Great Britain, will report to the convention on the conditions he found there. Mr. Tobin flew to England at the personal representative of President Roosevelt and as fraternal delegate from the AFL to the convention of the British Trades Union Congress.

We have mentioned some of the expected highlights of the earlier sessions of the convention. But the meat of the convention will be the action taken by the delegates on the vital issues which confront American workers and will play an important part in the conduct of the war.

Labor Looks Ahead

Unquestionably the fundamental issue is whether labor is prepared to make further sacrifices. We have no doubt as to what the answer of the convention will be.

The leaders of our trade union movement have been thinking and acting far in advance of any other group in our population ever since the first seeds of war were sown in Europe after Hitler. The American Federation of Labor was the first nation-wide organization in our country to condemn Hitler. It was the first to clamp a boycott on Nazi products. It was the first to denounce Japanese aggression against China. It was the first to demand that shipment of war materials to Japan be forbidden.

The American Federation of Labor was the leading advocate of aid to Britain long before we entered the war. It supported conscription, lend-lease and our national defense program without hesitation from the very beginning.

Along with President Roosevelt, the leaders of labor saw what was coming and made preparations long in advance. Adoption of the no-strike policy, lengthening of hours of work, relaxation of pre-war standards, stabilization of wages by industry-wide agreements and elimination of available skilled manpower where it was most vitally needed were some of the outstanding voluntary actions by labor which served to expedite the war effort and speed up war production.

This coming convention must decide whether it will be wiser for labor to continue to anticipate the needs of America and meet them in advance by voluntary action or to sit back and wait until compulsion is adopted to force labor to do certain things. Again we have no doubt what the answer will be.

For the most important thing American workers are anxious to preserve is their freedom. As long as they act of their own free will, that freedom will be safe. The moment they fail to do enough on their own and have to be compelled by law to act, their freedom is endangered. History has adopted point the way to avert this danger. We hope to see many of you there.

Two Thousand Strikes Prevented For Each Actual One Since Dec. 7

That Is the AFL's Proud No-Strike Record Since Pearl Harbor

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor, on its nation-wide "Labor For Victory" radio program over NBC, announced on Sept. 19 the no-strike score since Pearl Harbor—thousands of strikes prevented for each one that occurred.

How this achievement, vitally important to the success of our all-out war production, was accomplished was described by three outstanding labor surgeons who were interviewed on the program. They were Frank Fenton, National Director of Organization for the AFL; Dr. John R. Steelman, Director of the U. S. Conciliation Service, and William H. Davis, Chairman of the National War Labor Board.

Mr. Fenton disclosed that his office is besieged by peaceful meetings 99 out of 100 times between representatives of labor and management to settle grievances or even do things which create grievances. Then he said that the only strike agreement as solemn an obligation on the part of management not to take advantage of it as there is on labor to live up to it."

Industrial relations in America, Mr. Davis said, are "at last beginning to display the aspects of maturity." The industrial economy is compelling us to "grow up," he explained, and as a result the nation is getting more and more "organized cooperation between management and labor." He pointed to the increasing number of "unanimous" decisions of the War Labor Board; to the series of planned conferences initiated by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the AFL and the CIO; to the increasing number of joint labor-management committees in war production plants, and to the far-reaching labor relations experiences between the AFL and CIO as evidence of this fact.

Asked whether he was satisfied with the strike situation as it now exists, Mr. Davis responded:

"We have made substantial progress, but I wouldn't say I'm satisfied. I'll see to it that no strike until strikes affecting war production are eliminated entirely. We are handed in most cases right now and moving fast."

UNION BUYS WAR BONDS; ADMITS WOMEN MEMBERS

Massillon, Ohio.—AFL Federal Labor Union No. 18419 has purchased $2,100 war savings bonds. The union has also adopted the policy of inducting women workers as union members.

AFL Endorses Wage Stabilization Administered By Labor Board

Washington, D. C.—Appearing at a public hearing before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, AFL President William Green gave his endorsement to the principles of stabilizing the cost of living as outlined by President Roosevelt.

Mr. Green disclosed that organized labor has come to an understanding with the President on wage stabilization and, therefore, urged the committee not to write into the proposed Brown-Wagner stabilization bill any specific formula which restricts either the President and the trade union movement.

In reply to questions, Mr. Green declined to reveal the exact nature of the understanding with the Chief Executive because it is confidential for the time being.

He explained to the committee that representatives of the American Federation of Labor and the CIO have been conferring with the President for some time on all aspects of this knotty problem.

Labor, Mr. Green said, has acquiesced in the President's suggestion that wages should be stabilized along with farm prices. He urged legislative steps, however, to see that collective bargaining and the Government's mediation agencies are preserved.

It was possible, he said, that the War Labor Board would be authorized by the President to review voluntary wage increases, whereas it now has jurisdiction only in cases involving disputes.

"I am confident that that kind of control will be established through Executive Order," Mr. Green added.

The AFL President held, however, that the "Little Steel" formula for adjustment of wages should not be followed too strictly in all cases. Basic wage increases should keep pace if living costs rise above the 15 per cent level from Jan., 1941, to May, 1942, which is the basis of the "Little Steel" formula.

Green Calls On Organized Labor To Observe Fire Prevention Week

Washington, D. C.—President William Green of the American Federation of Labor urged officers and members of all Central Labor Unions and State Federations of Labor to give complete cooperation in the observance of the week of October 4 designated by President Roosevelt as Fire Prevention Week.

Pointing out that the President "has earnestly requested that all classes of people give special heed to the importance of taking an active interest in fire prevention during this week and throughout the year to preserve our material resources from the destructive toll of fire," Mr. Green said:

"It is quite natural and logical that labor would be, and is, interested in this program. The war situation offers a strong and convincing reason for service in making Fire Prevention Week a complete success. In order to do this, it is necessary that organizations of labor should cooperate fully with city authorities and the representatives of city and state governments, and particularly with the fire departments in the different cities.

"The people who reside in the different communities throughout the land should be organized into cooperative movements and should be encouraged to become especially interested in the development and promotion of Fire Prevention Week. I respectfully call upon the officers and members of central labor unions and state federations of labor to cooperate wholeheartedly and vigorously in the observance of Fire Prevention Week. It is my opinion that the officers of these organizations should consult with the representatives of the local unions of Fire Fighters in their respective communities, request their counsel and advice in planning their programs in cooperation with other civic groups and with community organizations."

Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Adopts Payroll Deduction Plan

New York, N. Y.—Responding to the urgent request of the U. S. Treasury War Savings Staff, which has designated September as Payroll Savings Month, the general executive board of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union voted to endorse the Government's ten per cent weekly payroll savings plan in the women's garment factories.

The general executive board called upon the membership of the ILGWU and its officers in every part of the country to work in cooperation with the officials of the Treasury's Savings Staff in the enrollment of shops under government supervision for the carrying out of the ten per cent Wage Savings Plan.

There are more than 8,000 women's garment plants in the United States, 5,700 of which are located in the New York area employing over 200,000 persons. The ILGWU membership is well above 310,000.

The endorsement of the Treasury Savings Plan, President David Dubinsky of the ILGWU announced, follows the union's own drive to raise $25,000,000 in War Bonds and Stamps which was launched last Spring. Local unions which are still engaged in the campaign are "advised to place individual pledges and are desirous of fulfilling their quotas, he said, will be given an opportunity to do so within a reasonable time.

All the associations of employers in the women's garment industry with which the ILGWU is in contractual relations will, at once be contacted to secure from them the utmost cooperation in organizing the savings subscriptions in the shops.

TOBIN TO BROADCAST ON BRITISH LABOR

Washington, D. C.—Daniel J. Tobin, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, arrived safely in this country after a hazardous trip by clipper to Britain as the special representative of President Roosevelt and as the fraternal delegate of the American Federation of Labor to the convention of the British Trades Union Congress.

Mr. Tobin announced he would report on labor and industrial conditions in Great Britain in an important radio address over a nation-wide hookup of the Columbia Broadcasting System at 10:15 P.M., E.W.T., Sept. 26.

DATA ON AFL UNIONS AID TO RED CROSS REQUESTED

Washington, D. C.—What is your union doing to aid the American Red Cross? Undoubtedly labor's activities in the interest of the work of the humanitarian organization reach large proportions, but many of them are not being received by the national office of the Red Cross which publishes a Red Cross bulletin summarizing its activities.

To make the record complete, AFL union officials and officers of the official and weekly labor press are requested to send regularly material on the activities of locals and national and international unions in the interest of the Red Cross to this address: Mary Fond, Labor Adviser, Public Information Service, American Red Cross National Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

WESTERN DIVISION SET UP BY CTU WESTERN UNION MEN

Cincinnati.—Representatives of 27,000 Western Union employes affiliated with the Commercial Telegraphers' Union set up a new Western Union Division, CTU-AFL, at a convention held here. Heretofore all Western Union locals—69 in number—were affiliated directly with the International CTU. The new Western Union Division will take over the chartering of Western Union locals, and function as a national Western Union division under the jurisdiction of the Commercial Telegraphers' Union.

With all but a few district elections awaiting dispatch by the National Labor Board, Western Union Division now represents 18,548 employes who have been certified, and 9,000 others who are in unopposed districts, or more than three-fourths of the total eligibles. The Western Union Division, in cooperation with the American Federation of Labor federal unions, has instituted proceedings with the Labor Board for a national election, with a view of negotiating a national agreement with Western Union.

Officers elected for a one-year term included: J. Al Peters, Kansas City, general chairman, and A. W. Bauer, Kansas City, general secretary-treasurer.

DEAD-LINE FOR MAILING GIFTS TO SERVICE MEN

Unions and union members who are preparing to send Christmas gifts to unionists in any branch of the United States armed forces overseas should bear in mind that the government has ruled that they must be mailed between Oct. 1 and Nov. 1.

No package may weigh more than 6 pounds if it is being sent overseas.

Labor Will Back People's Peace, Show No Mercy To Fascist Enemy, Green Tells Legion Convention

AFL Chief Says Labor-Legion Policies Constitute Real Civilian Defense

Kansas City — AFL President William Green told the annual convention of the American Legion here that the American people will not permit international politicians to dictate the terms of peace that will come after victory in this war.

"You men thought you did the job in 1917 and 1918," Mr. Green told the veterans. "But the international politicians made a mockery of your sufferings and your sacrifices. The American people will not be duped twice by power politics. This time we are going to see to it that victory is worthwhile, that peace means peace and that our faith in freedom, in democracy, in justice and in God will be established throughout the world on a sound and enduring basis."

Denouncing the merciless savagery of the Axis leaders toward conquered peoples, Mr. Green declared:

"The day of reckoning is coming! Those guilty of perpetrating these outrages against human decency will receive as little mercy as they have shown. Not in a spirit of revenge, but with the sensible thoroughness of a forest ranger trampling out the embers of a forest fire, we are determined to extinguish every spark of that hateful, murderous Fascist teaching which has brought nothing but death, destruction and despair to millions of innocent men, women and children."

Mr. Green told the Legionnaires that American workers are winning the battle of production, which is the first step toward opening new offensive drives against the enemy.

This battle of production, he said, began long before Pearl Harbor as a national defense program designed to make America the arsenal of democracy. He praised the Legion for giving its full support to that program and for consistently advocating national preparedness. He pointed out that the AFL had always taken a similar stand.

"In fact," he added, "I can truthfully say that the far sighted policies of both the American Legion and the American Federation of Labor helped pave the way for prompt strengthening of America's defenses and saved our nation from becoming an easy prey of the enemy.

"This is true not only of our physical defenses, but of our psychological defenses. America did not fall victim to the Fifth Column because organizations like the American Legion and the American Federation of Labor had helped to make our people aware of the danger long in advance. When other beguiling or vicious organizations spoke out in clarion tones against any form of totalitarianism, it met with a cool reception from American democracy.

"Our voices sounded the first clear warning. We were also constituted the first real civilian defense against the forces of evil who were inevitably destined to become our enemies.

"The members of the American Legion and the American Federation of Labor think as one and act as one because we are motivated by only one guiding principle—Americanism. We believe in individual and collective freedom, we believe in free enterprise, we believe in justice and in fair play. That is our creed and no one can ever compel us or force us to abandon it. We will work and fight and sacrifice together in defense of this faith, as friends and brothers and fellow-Americans."

Mr. Green said that what frightens the Axis more than anything else today is the knowledge that the free workers of America will outproduce the slave labor of the Axis nations. He added:

"His slave labor battalions are falling down on the job. That is why he is being driven to such desperate expedients as compelling the puppet Vichy Government to draft workers and women for forced labor in the munitions plants of Germany. I can tell Hitler now that such measures won't produce the goods for him. Those men and women of France, who hate Hitler with their last breath, will not do more than go through the motions under the whip. But our men and women are working with their hearts and souls and no torture that Hitler and his lackeys can invent can compel his slave workers to match our production achievements."

Conscription of Workers Opposed By Secretary of Labor Perkins

Cleveland, Ohio.—Opposition to labor conscription was expressed by Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins in a speech to the convention of the United Association of Plumbers and Steamfitters of the United States and Canada.

"I disagree that it is advisable that Congress must enact legislation which will enable the War Manpower Commission to regulate the movement and assignment of workers in war industry to cope with the situation," she said.

"Production short cuts, consistent upgrading of new workers under skilled supervision, the infiltration of increasing numbers of women in light war industry and the apprenticeship and plant replacement training program, I believe, will obviate the necessity for such drastic regulatory legislation."

Earlier the secretary told a press conference that government experts had in many cases overestimated the manpower needs of new plants. As an example she gave the Willow Run bomber plant of the Ford Motor Co., where the estimated manpower needed was 150,000 workers instead of the actual number of workers turned out to be 60,000.

Building and Metal Trades Pact Signed by Basic Magnesium Firm

Las Vegas, Nev.—Out in the desert, one of the hugest contracting jobs in the nation—the $100,000,000 plant of the Basic Magnesium Corporation—is now beginning to take form. It is a 100 per cent AFL union job.

Agreements with the corporation, covering the 10,000 construction workers now on the site and the additional thousands who will be employed in the production plant, have just been signed by the Building Trades and Metal Trades Departments of the American Federation of Labor.

These agreements are described by AFL officials as the finest existing anywhere in the country.

Magnesium, a metal lighter than aluminum, is vitally needed in airplant manufacture. One unit of the plant is already in production and nine others are being rushed to completion.

Workers Support F. D. R. Program On Living Costs, Shishkin Says

Washington, D. C.—"Both farmers and workers want stabilization that is fair and just to all," declared Boris Shishkin, economist of the American Federation of Labor, in the American Forum of the Air nation-wide broadcast over the Mutual network. "They are behind the President's stabilization program, and they insist that it be kept on program indivisible, applied to workers, farmers, bankers, war contractors, businessmen and tradesmen alike.

"The workers have gone a long way toward achieving wage stabilization. Wages of shipbuilding workers have been stabilized by agreement for the duration. Wages on all war construction have been stabilized by agreement for the duration. Wages of seamen have been stabilized for the duration. Wages of nearly a million workers in industries have been set by the War Labor Board. Today the pay of more than six million wage workers is firmly anchored. It will be kept anchored for the duration by the wage stabilization procedures that have already been established.

"Workers want stabilization of all wages because they want stability of wages and of employment now and after the war. They know that full employment after the war can be achieved only if our economy is kept in balance. They know that a runaway boom can only lead to a disastrous post-war bust.

"Farmers want stabilization of farm prices. They want recognition of their plight when in 1933 the nation agreed that they were entitled to parity prices. They don't want to destroy the justice of the parity principle. They don't want another boom and bust. They want the stability of parity now and after the war.

"Holding the freezing of wages alone will not stop inflation. The freezing of wage inequalities and wage injustices will stymie our war production and disrupt our manpower mobilization. It will make complete job freezing necessary. It will bring into America the kind of compulsory labor the Nazis have just extended into the workers of Vichy France.

"Complete wage stabilization can be achieved by agreement under the procedures of the War Labor Board. It means that wages paid for the same work will remain stable for the duration of the war. Such wage stabilization provides only enough flexibility, and no more, to make possible unhindered expansion of war production and unhampered mobilization of America's free workers for war employment."

BATES URGES LABOR TO UNIFY RANKS

Toronto, Can.—"It is my profound conviction that all labor, men and women in the United States and Canada desire to work together so we may complete our task of safeguarding democracy and free labor."

That conviction was made by Harry C. Bates, president of the Bricklayers International, at the AFL peace committee which is seeking an agreement with the CIO, in an address to the convention of the Bricklayers in this city.

"Only a full measure of unity in the ranks of the trade union movement will make us fit to gain a full measure of participation in the war and recognition of the supreme effort labor is making with this great struggle," Mr. Bates declared.

Humphrey Mitchell, Canadian Minister of Labor, heartily supported Mr. Bates' position.

"There is not sufficient room in Canada for two or three labor organizations fighting for supremacy," he said.

CLOSED SHOP PACT GAINED DESPITE LYNCHING THREAT

Walnut Ridge, Ark.—A threat by Walnut Ridge officials to lynch AFL organizers failed to prevent the winning of a closed shop agreement at a flying school construction project.

The unionists also won a permanent federal injunction restraining the town officials from interfering with union activity.

Announcement of the agreement was made by Pres. Lev G. Loring of the Memphis Trades and Labor Council, one of the three union officials whom Town Marshal Buchanan had threatened to run out of town, during attributed the anti-unionism prevailing here largely to the commercial press.

Buchanan reminded the organizers of the railway strikers who were hanged near Harrison in 1922 and hinted that similar measures would be taken in Walnut Ridge. "An appeal for protection to the county sheriff brought the retort that he 'did not propose to have racketeers around.'"

SIOUX FALLS LABOR DAY FETE SELLS WAR BONDS

Sioux Falls, S. D.—The two-day Labor Day celebration sponsored jointly by the Sioux Falls Trades and Labor Assembly and El Riad Shrine Temple was notable for its concentration to the war effort. Floats which featured the parade in previous years were omitted and the sum the floats would have cost was used to purchase war bonds and stamps. The assembly and the Riad Temple have invested $38,000 in war bonds, and the Riad Temple Union members are on the ten per cent payroll deduction basis.

The program on both days was promoted by the sale of war bonds and stamps. Two hundred girls selling stamps, special all attractions—the band concert Sunday night, the parade on Monday, baseball both days between Mitchell and Sioux Falls, and the dance on Labor Day night.

At the opening of Victory Hut, dedicated for the sale of war bonds and stamps during the appearance of four movie stars, fourteen representatives of local unions were on hand either purchasing bonds for their unions or for themselves.

The Labor Day parade ended at the coliseum where Mayor John Queen of Winona delivered an inspiring address.

Ralph Watson, potentate of El Riad Shrine Temple, and his committee did splendid work in securing the various units cooperating to make the celebration a complete success.